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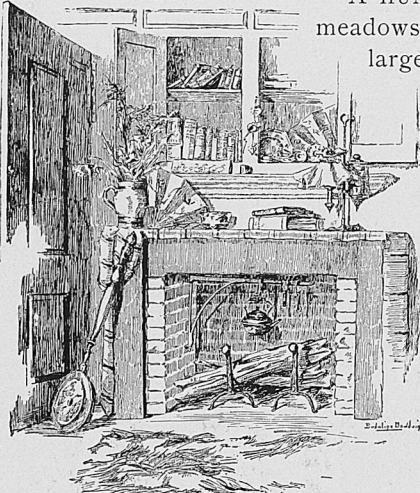
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ABANDONED FARMS FOR STUDIO PURPOSES

BY HARRIETTE BOWDOIN.

With original illustrations by Harriette Bowdoin and Birdaline Bowdoin.



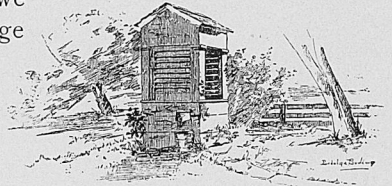
Drawn by Birdaline Bowdoin.

A COSEY FIREPLACE.

A HUNDRED acres of land, woods, hills, brooks, and meadows were all ours for the time. The house was a large, rambling old place, in good repair, with big fireplaces in the best rooms. We furnished it with rugs and curtains from home, and by borrowing freely from neighboring garrets.

To be sure chairs were very few, but each of us had one, and this we carried about with us from room to room. Old barrels answered well for dressing-tables, and boxes and horse-troughs make fine divans when they must.

Our water-supply we obtained from a well. A bucket was on one end of the rope, and when we came a large



Drawn by Birdaline Bowdoin.

THE WELL.



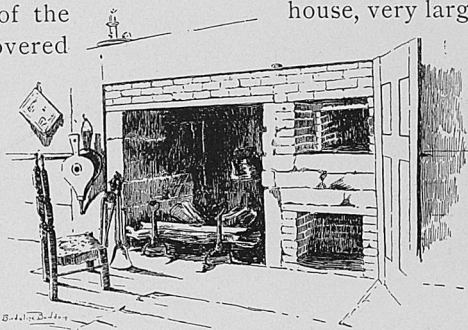
Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

SOME OLD BARNs.

gested that it should be strained. A piece of cheese-cloth, several times doubled, was used with great success. The water was clear, but oh, what a flavor it had! We thought this was due to the rope, and that it would always be like that, so we drank milk for two days; then we ventured to try the water again, and lo! as if by magic it was clear, cold, and delicious again. We had tasted the cheese-cloth. The stone was not replaced, and without it it took two people to pull up a bucket of water. It

was perfectly astonishing how much a family could use. Our studio was the most delightful part of the house, very large and cool, and opening on a veranda covered with grape-vines.

We were over a mile from our village, but we were troubled at first by wandering over the neighboring town farm in search of models and they did not come any more. We were the objects of much curiosity on the part of the farmers, however, and when one of them passed by and saw us painting a bit of the meadow beyond, he would stop, look round, and seeing nothing he considered picturesque, offer to show us some



Drawn by Birdaline Bowdoin.

THE OLD BAKE-OVEN.

good views for pictures, usually taking us to the top of a hill which commanded a town, a river, and countless other hills. The wild flowers grew in the greatest profusion, the laurel covering the hills and pastures, the pretty hardhacks sending their pointed pink spikes over the stone walls, and ferns everywhere, even in some of the roads that were equal to anything in New Hampshire for steepness.

The grocery store in town was a rural concern, or, as one of the farmers said, "A place



Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

DRESSING-ROOM.



Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

THE SUPPER-TABLE.

where you can get everything from your hat to your shoes, both externally and internally." We had some original characters there, as in all places where people live in solitude and allow their peculiarities to develop. One of these was a tall, angular farm-hand, rather slow of movement and speech, who therefore had little chance among the group that gathered about the woodshed in the evening. When an idea did occur to him he shook himself together, rose deliberately, lifted a big hand, opened his mouth, and suggested, in a peremptory sort of way, "Shet up. I want to say so'thin' meself."



Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

THE PORCH.



Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

NECESSITIES.

picturesque, and they suggest possibilities of romance. It would be hard to say exactly why we take so much pleasure in things that have gone to ruin, or at least into disuse. Possibly it is not at all due to perverseness, but merely to a justifiable seeking for lines that have lapsed into a little more harmony with nature than the contours of trim new buildings are wont to possess. It is certainly a fact that neither untouched nature, nor nature neatly conformed to modern ideas, has the peculiar charm and the wealth of artistic subjects that belong to the places where she is reasserting the rights that she never wholly gives up.

But they were all very hospitable and kind, and did everything to make us happy and content, though they could not understand the perverse instinct in us that made us find more delight in neglected old places that were taking care of themselves than in those which showed prosperity and thrift.

There is a great fascination in these abandoned farms. They are almost always



Drawn by Harriette Bowdoin.

A CORNER IN THE BOUDOIR.